Types of signs

- Individually listed and district properties receive Type A (20” x 24”) signs with approximately 250 words of descriptive text.
- Owners of properties that contribute to listed historic districts receive Type B (13” x 16”) signs, with up to 185 words of interpretive text.
- Special Type C wall-mounted stacked panels (two 8” x 12”) are for properties with limited wall space.

Hardware is included for the mounting of your choice, but the applicant is responsible for installation. Freestanding installation requires a threaded pipe (not included). All plaques are durable pewter-finished anodized aluminum with dark etched letters, and are designed to withstand the elements.

Explore signs online

ExploreBig shares the history and architecture of select buildings and places listed in the National Register of Historic Places and interpreted by the National Register Sign Program. Visit ExploreBig.org or download the free app.
What is the sign program?
If you own or represent a property that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Montana Historical Society invites you to participate in our National Register sign program.

Our state’s distinctive National Register sign includes a special logo and brief description of the property’s historic significance. A smaller, matching sign in a choice of styles describes contributing properties within districts listed in the Register. The Montana Accommodations Tax helps offset the cost to owners.

Montana’s distinctive National Register signs can be placed on or immediately adjacent to the Register-listed building or site. The signs identify Register properties and invite visitors to stop and learn more. Since the program began in 1990, over 1,700 National Register signs have been placed across Montana. Locals and visitors alike have come to recognize that a Montana National Register sign marks a place important to the history of our state.

The purpose
The Montana Historical Society has developed this project to improve public knowledge of Montana’s rich and colorful heritage, to encourage others to seek Register listing, and to promote the preservation of our historic resources.

Who can apply?
- Owners of individually listed National Register properties
- Owners or representatives of listed historic districts
- Owners of contributing properties within listed historic districts

Who writes my sign text?
Montana Historical Society historians will carefully craft each interpretive sign text, drawing from the site’s National Register nomination and a variety of other primary and secondary resources. Each text is designed to highlight the property’s distinctive history and stimulate readers’ interest. Applicants will receive a draft text for review and approval prior to preparation of final sign copy. Allow 30 days for sign text writing and approval, and 8–10 weeks for production and delivery.

How to apply
Apply online at https://mhs.mt.gov/Shpo/Signs or mail the attached application to the address at the bottom of the form.

The cost
Owners or sponsoring organizations pay less than 10% of sign manufacturing costs. The Montana Historical Society provides all other costs including research and writing time. The current cost of each district/individual property sign is approximately $800. Contributing property signs, either style, cost approximately $500.
Post mount brackets for freestanding signs cost $120.
Cost to applicants is only $55 for an individual/district sign and $35 for a contributing sign. All post mount brackets cost $7.

The sign program is one of many programs administered by the Montana Historical Society. To widely serve its citizens, the sign program charges a minimal fee for an exceptional product. If you appreciate this service and wish to express your support, we would greatly appreciate your contribution. Your tax-deductible donation above the fixed sign cost will directly benefit the educational services the Montana Historical Society offers. Simply check the appropriate box on the application form and enclose your donation.

Payment
Please do not send payment with the application. When you approve your text, return it with your check made payable to the Montana Historical Society. Payment of the fee is due upon approval of the draft text.